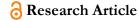
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Communication and Organisational Effectiveness in Selected Public Universities in Uganda

Wilberforce Turyahikayo¹ □, Wilson Mugizi¹ □

¹Department of Educational Planning and Management, School of Education, Kyambogo University, Kampala, Uganda

Abstract

Organisational effectiveness is critical for universities as it enhances stakeholder satisfaction, improves employee relations, streamlines business processes, promotes learning and development, and contributes to overall institutional success. However, achieving organisational effectiveness has remained a significant challenge for public universities in Uganda. This study examined the influence of communication on organisational effectiveness, focusing on how communication structure, flow, climate, and message characteristics influenced organisational effectiveness. The study adopted the quantitative approach; hence, a correlational research design was employed in this study. The study focused on a sample of 231 university managers, which included a diverse group of both academic and administrative leaders from four public universities in Uganda. The carefully selected study participants represented the various levels of management within the institutions, ensuring a comprehensive perspective on the role of communication in organisational effectiveness. The data were gathered using self-administered questionnaires capturing detailed information on various aspects of communication, including structure, flow, climate, and message characteristics, and organisational effectiveness in terms of productivity, adaptability, and flexibility. The findings from the descriptive analysis revealed that while organisational effectiveness was moderate, communication levels were high. The PLS-SEM results showed that communication structure, flow, and climate had a significant positive effect on organisational effectiveness. The study concluded that a well-defined communication structure is essential for effective organisational effectiveness, effective communication flow involving smooth information exchange is crucial for organisational effectiveness, and an organisational climate that fosters effective information exchange is essential for organizational effectiveness. Therefore, university managers should focus on creating a clear communication structure, ensuring the smooth flow of information, and cultivating a conducive communication climate to promote organisational effectiveness. The implication of this study is that it underscores the importance of a well-defined communication structure, effective communication flow, and positive communication climate as essential components that can significantly enhance organisational effectiveness in universities.

Keywords: Climate, Communication, Effectiveness, Flow, Structure, Message Characteristics

Wilberforce Turyahikayo wturya1234@gmail.com

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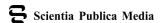
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1. INTRODUCTION

The problem of the effectiveness of organisations is widely regarded as a complex one and is a highly debated topic in the field of organisational studies (Subramaniyam & Rajakumar, 2021). Gutterman (2023) pointed out the existence of a lack of consensus among organisational scholars on how to define and measure effectiveness, with many adopting measures that focus on how well organisations achieve their goals by utilizing available resources efficiently and effectively. Tracing the concept from earlier studies, in



the 1950s, Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum (1957) recognised organisational effectiveness as a multifaceted issue in social organisations, noting that it was initially evaluated based on productivity and profitability during the industrial era. Mott (1972) defined organisational effectiveness as the capacity to organize resources for action, production, and adaptation. Cameron and Whetten (1983) highlighted that organisational effectiveness is frequently equated with terms such as performance, success, and productivity. Shet et al. (2019) emphasise that organisational effectiveness encompasses not only the quality and quantity of accomplishments, but also the organization's ability to adapt and respond to shifting environmental conditions. In essence, organisational effectiveness refers to how well an organisation accomplishes its objectives.

In an attempt to suggest measures of organisational effectiveness, Mott (1972) identified three key measures, namely productivity, adaptability, and flexibility. Later, Cameron (1978) developed a model for higher education institutions, comprising nine dimensions that are organisational health, student satisfaction, academic development, career development, personal growth, job satisfaction, professional development, quality of services, and resource acquisition. Enriquez (2019) conceptualised organisational effectiveness in terms of instruction, research, and extension services. However, these measures do not differentiate organisational effectiveness from the performance of academic staff and university roles. According to Kasule et al. (2022) and Mugizi (2018), the roles of academic staff and the core functions of universities focus on three main areas, namely; teaching, research and publication, and community or societal engagement. In this study, organisational effectiveness was measured using the framework proposed by Mott (1972), which includes productivity, adaptability, and flexibility. These measures offer clarity and specificity, providing a more precise assessment than Cameron's (1978) outcome-based measures. Kataria et al. (2013) clarified that productivity includes financial outputs, educational results, research achievements, and extension services; adaptability involves organisational learning, customer satisfaction and a focus on change, and flexibility encompasses strategic, structural, and operational flexibility.

Organisational effectiveness is essential for universities as it improves stakeholder satisfaction, strengthens employee relations, optimises business processes, fosters learning and growth, and contributes to overall institutional success (Lo et al., 2017). Effective organisations experience improvements in customer relationships, innovation, motivation, and commitment (Alrowwad et al., 2020). Kimutai and Kwabai (2018) highlight that organisational effectiveness fosters work environment, cultivates cohesion, dedication, and job fulfilment, galvanising employee motivation. Singh (2015) argues that organisational effectiveness drives organisational development by ensuring satisfaction among individuals involved in task completion, thereby improving their productivity. According to Tahsildari and Shahnaei (2015), it strengthens an organisation's capacity to function at its highest potential. In a similar vein, Yadav et al. (2022) note that that it enhances an organisation's ability to operate at optimal levels. Similarly, Yadav et al. (2022) argue that effective organisations are more efficient, particularly in areas like creativity and organisational wellbeing. Bartuševičienė and Šakalytė (2013) explain that it is a crucial measure of an organisation's progress in achieving its mission and goals.

Cognisant of the pivotal role of organisational effectiveness in driving institutional success, Ugandan universities have sought to bolster their effectiveness through multifaceted strategies. Fors instance, universities have initiated measures to enhance research productivity, including competitive research funding, more investments in innovation, talent nurturing programmes, and a heightened emphasis on quality control (Kakembo & Barymak, 2017; Tizikara & Mugizi, 2017). Furthermore, universities have fostered a culture of social responsibility by engaging faculty and students in outreach programmes in the communities through charitable initiatives (Ddungu & Edopu, 2016). They have also adjusted their operational, structural, and strategic activities to meet global higher education demands. This includes developing market-driven curriculums and increasing emphasis on ICT (Kagoda, 2019). Furthermore, universities have adopted new globalised communication techniques like zoom, e-learning, and various social media networking (Namatovu & Arinaitwe, 2024).

Despite the effort above, organisational effectiveness in Ugandan universities remains low. Challenges include low-quality teaching and research, limited commitment to community engagement, and inadequate supervision of students (Turyahikayo, 2024). Furthermore, some academic staff exhibit unethical behaviour, such as falsifying marks and cheating on examinations (Kato et al., 2023). Research output remains low, characterized by minimal scholarly publications and a struggle to secure externally

funded research projects. The high-performing university in terms of research productivity is Makerere University, whose academic staff produce an average of two publications per staff in 10 years (Kasule et al., 2022). Ugandan universities rank poorly in global rankings, highlighting the need for improvement in organisational effectiveness (Turyahikayo, 2024). This poor show of Uganda universities globally and locally called for this study to suggest how to enhance their organisational effectiveness.

Previous research in Uganda on the organisational effectiveness of universities has explored various factors, such as the impact of funding on lecturers' research effectiveness (Kasule et al., 2023), the role of institutional culture (Turyahikayo et al., 2024), and the influence of leadership styles (Turyahikayo et al., 2023). Studies in other regions have also examined different variables affecting organisational effectiveness, including knowledge management (Tang, 2017), organisational sustainability (Nwanzu & Babalola, 2019), human resource practices (Teimouri et al., 2018), and communication (Hargie, 2016). This study draws upon Gatekeeping Theory, originally introduced by social psychologist Lewin (1947), which explores how information is filtered and condensed into essential messages. The theory underscores the selection, framing, and dissemination of information as central processes in communication (Shoemaker & Vos, 2014). It also stresses the importance of factors such as communication structure, flow, climate, and the nature of messages in shaping outcomes (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2013). Guided by this theoretical foundation, the study tested the following hypotheses:

H1: The structure of communication significantly affects the organisational effectiveness of public universities.

H2: The flow of communication significantly affects the organisational effectiveness of public universities. H3: The communication climate significantly contributes to the organisational effectiveness of public universities.

H4: Message characteristics significantly affect the organisational effectiveness of public universities.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Review

This research draws on the Gatekeeping Theory of Organisational Communication, originally conceptualized by Lewin in 1947, which provides a foundational framework for understanding the dynamics of organisational communication. The theory focuses on the process of filtering vast amounts of information to deliver only key messages by gatekeepers. Gatekeepers are individuals in strategic decisionmaking roles who decide which information is suitable for public dissemination (Schwalbe et al., 2015). Gatekeeping involves filtering, refining, and disseminating information to the public (Shoemaker & Vos, 2014). This theoretical framework guides how information is controlled and selected for public distribution. It proposes that organisational leaders, as gatekeepers, are responsible for managing the flow of information, deciding which messages should be shared with the public (Wallace, 2018). Gatekeeping involves various processes, such as withholding, presenting, channelling, shaping, manipulating, and timing the release of information (Potnis & Tahamtan, 2021). As mediators, gatekeepers determine what information is appropriate to share (Shoemaker & Vos, 2014). The theory underscores the importance of managing communication flow, climate, structure, and message characteristics to ensure effective organisational communication (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2013). Thus, the Theory of Gate Keeping suggests a process that should be considered in organisational communication, namely communication flow, climate, structure, and message characteristics. The influence of these on organisational effectiveness was examined.

2.2. Communication and Organisational Effectiveness

The word "communication" is derived from the Latin word communis, denoting "to share." This implies that communication involves the sharing of information (Musheke & Phiri, 2021). Essentially, communication is the process of conveying information from one person to another, playing a crucial role in guiding and mobilizing the workforce toward achieving organisational goals and objectives (Ukpong, 2022). The Gatekeeping Theory emphasizes essential processes in organisational communication, including communication structure, flow, climate, and message characteristics. Communication structure refers to the networks through which information flows within an organization, which can be either centralized or decentralized (Guo et al., 2023). Previous studies (Andersson & Zbirenko, 2014; Ding et al., 2024; Kovačič

& Lužar, 2011; Löfgren & Eklund, 2021; Mehmood, 2022; Musheke & Phiri, 2021; Tsebee, 2024; Weldeghebriel et al., 2022) have related communication structure to organisational effectiveness-related concepts specifically organisational and employee performance. These studies generally found that communication structure significantly influences organisation effectiveness. However, none of these studies focused on organizations in Uganda, creating a knowledge gap in this context. Further, none of the research was conducted within the university setting, highlighting a population gap in understanding how communication structure impacts organisation hence this study.

Communication flow refers to the movement of information within an organization, which can be categorized as downward, upward, or horizontal communication (Ophilia & Hidayat, 2021). Downward and upward communication are forms of vertical communication, where messages flow reciprocally between different organizational levels, either from higher to lower levels or vice versa. Horizontal communication, on the other hand, occurs between individuals at the same organizational level or position. A smooth flow of communication is essential for organizations to disseminate messages effectively, thereby improving the performance of members within the organization (Juddi et al., 2021). Several studies (Kim et al., 2016; Kwon et al., 2020; Latuheru, 2022; Terzić, 2018; Zhang et al., 2022) have explored how communication flow influences organizational effectiveness. Nonetheless, Kim et al. (2016) and Zhang et al. (2022) provided a knowledge gap as their studies focused on the work-related behaviour of commitment, which leads to organisational effectiveness hence indirectly alluded to it. Again, Kim et al. (2016) contradicted other studies by suggesting a negative relationship between communication flow and organizational effectiveness, presenting an evidence gap. These inconsistencies indicated a lack of consensus, suggesting that each study should be evaluated on its own merit. This underscored the need for the present study.

Communication climate refers to the atmosphere created by how individuals in an organization interact, feel about, and treat each other. It serves as a bridge between employees and the organization, reflecting the beliefs and attitudes of workers toward the organization (Lantara, 2019). A positive communication climate influences the quality of the work environment, enhances organizational effectiveness, and fosters organizational commitment (Mesfin et al., 2020). Several studies (Arab & Muneeb, 2019; Helpiastuti & Giyanto, 2020; Lantara, 2019; Ruliana et al., 2018; Quilon & Perreras, 2020; Srimata et al., 2019 Sugiarto & Putra, 2020) have explored the impact of organizational communication climate on effectiveness. While all of these studies found that communication climate significantly influences organizational effectiveness, none included university staff in their sample. As a result, the findings did not account for the unique dynamics of higher education institutions. This gap prompted the need for this study, which focused on universities.

Message characteristics refer to the attributes of communication such as clarity, relevance, uniqueness, objectivity, neutrality, trustworthiness, authenticity, as well as coherence and consistency (Kwon et al., 2021). These characteristics are crucial in determining the effectiveness of persuasive communication (Rickard, 2021). Shen and Bigsby (2013) categorized message characteristics into three main types that are message content, structure, and style. Studies (Arab & Muneeb, 2019; Leje et al., 2019; Musheke & Phiri, 2021) have explored the relationship between message characteristics and organisational effectiveness. While these studies indicated that message characteristics significantly influenced organisational effectiveness, they highlighted a knowledge gap. Specifically, these studies were conducted outside Uganda, and limited empirical research had been done within the Ugandan context. This gap in both geographic and empirical focus led to the need for this study, which examined public universities in Uganda.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design and Sample

This study applied a correlational research design, a quantitative method aimed at examining the relationship between multiple variables. This approach facilitated the analysis of both the strength and direction of the connection between communication and organizational effectiveness (Mohajan, 2020). By using this design, the study quantified how communication influenced organizational effectiveness, allowing for statistical inferences. The study considered a population of 286 academic and administrative leaders

across four universities, that were Busitema University (65), Gulu University (69), Kyambogo University (88), and Mbarara University of Science and Technology (64). Given the relatively small population, the intention was to include all individuals in the study. Nevertheless, ultimate data was collected from 234 participants, representing 81.8% of the original sample. This response rate was considered adequate, as a response rate exceeding 50% is generally accepted in social science research (Pielsticker & Hiebl, 2020). Therefore, data sufficient for generalisation of the findings was corrected.

3.2. Instrumentation

This study employed a self-administered questionnaire to gather data. Section of the questionnaire captured the respondents' demographic information, while Sections B and C were on the independent variable, communication, and the dependent variable, organisational effectiveness. Organisational effectiveness was assessed through three pivotal indicators of productivity, adaptability, and flexibility. Productivity measures instructional quality, research output, extension services, and financial performance (Enriquez, 2019; Mihaiu et al., 2010). Adaptability encompassed three facets, namely; focus on change, customer orientation, and organisational learning (Leufvén et al., 2015; Saxe & Weitz, 1982; Szamosi & Duxbury, 2002). Flexibility covered operational, structural, and strategic dimensions (Abu-Nahel et al., 2020; Angeles et al., 2022; Yousuf et al., 2019). Communication examined communication climate, flow, structure, and message characteristics (Bakar & Mustaffa, 2013). A five-point Likert scale was utilised to measure these indicators, with responses ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This method enabled the collection of quantitative data, which were subsequently analysed using statistical techniques to uncover trends and relationships. To assess validity, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio correlations were examined (Table 2). Reliability was evaluated using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha (Table 3).

3.3. Data Analysis Methods

The dataset was subjected to a two-pronged analytical approach, combining descriptive statistics with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 4. Initial descriptive analyses, encompassing mean score calculations, provided insight into respondents' perceptions of communication dynamics and organisational effectiveness within the university context. PLS-SEM was employed due to its strengths to capture complex relationships, accommodating higher-order constructs and interaction effects, and managing multiple latent variables. SmartPLS proved particularly adept at identifying predictive relationships between variables grounded in robust theoretical frameworks and uncovering causal pathways. The application of PLS-SEM facilitated a clear understanding of the interrelationships between constructs and their corresponding measurement models, thereby explaining the connections between latent variables and their associated indicators (Hair Jr et al., 2021). With a sample size of 343, surpassing the recommended threshold of 100 (Yang et al., 2021), PLS-SEM proved to be an appropriate analytical framework for this study. Leveraging SmartPLS enabled a comprehensive examination and visual representation of the causal pathways linking communication to organisational effectiveness.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

The respondents' demographic characteristics were examined. These encompassed gender, age distribution, educational attainment, and years of work experience. The results are presented in Table 1.

The results in Table 1 show that the males accounted for 65.0%, while the females were 35%. Most participants (78.2%) were aged 40 years or older, with 19.2% falling within the 30-40-year age range, and 2.6% aged 30 years or younger. In terms of education, the largest group (49.1%) had PhDs, master's degree holders were 43.2% and 7.7% with bachelor's degrees. Regarding work experience, 42.7% had been in their roles for 10 years or more, 26.9% for 5-10 years, 17.5% for 1-5 years, and 12.8% for less than one year.

These results reflect the diverse range of participants, including academic and administrative roles, allowing for generalisation to different categories of university staff.

Profiles	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	152	65.0
	Female	82	35.0
	Total	234	100.0
Age Categories	Up to 30	6	2.6
	30 but below 40	45	19.2
	40 and above	183	78.2
	Total	234	100.0
Education level	Bachelor's degree	18	7.7
	Masters	101	43.2
	PhD	115	49.1
	Total	234	100.0
Working experience	Less than one year	30	12.8
0 1	1 but less than 5 years	41	17.5
	5 but less than 10 years	63	26.9
	More than 10 years	100	42.7
	Total	234	100.0

Table 1. Background Profiles of the Respondents

4.2. Measurement Models

The development of the measurement models was guided by stringent methodologies, with convergent validity measured using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity examined through Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). Reliability was confirmed through both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability metrics. Furthermore, multicollinearity diagnostics were conducted using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to ensure the independence of predictor variables. The empirical results of these assessments are summarized in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio Correlations (HTMT) for Discriminant Validity

Measures	Means	AVE	OE	AD	FL	PR
OE	3.44					
AD	3.56	0.527	0.843			
FL	3.42	0.545	0.889	0.887		
PR	3.34	0.513	0.702	0.675	0.889	
Measures	Means	AVE	COM	CC	CS	CL
COM	3.93					
CC	3.87	0.790	0.891			
CS	3.98	0.560	0.880	0.657		
CL	3.95	0.578	0.867	0.746	0.660	

AD = Adaptability, CC = communication climate, CL = communication flow, COM = communication, CS = communication structure, FL = Flexibility, OE = Organisational effectiveness, PR = Productivity

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 2 reveal that the universities' overall organisational effectiveness was moderate, with a mean score of 3.44. This suggests that responses were generally near the neutral point on the Likert scale, where a score of 3 indicates "neutral." In terms of communication-related constructs, adaptability scored higher with a mean of 3.56, while flexibility (mean = 3.42) and productivity (mean = 3.34) both showed moderate mean values. For overall communication, the mean score was relatively high at 3.93, indicating agreement with the communication aspects, as it was closer to "agree" on the Likert scale. Specifically, the means for communication climate (3.87), structure (3.95), and flow (3.95) were also high. The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio correlation (HTMT) values in Table 2, explaining the distinctiveness of constructs were below the 0.90 threshold, confirming that the constructs demonstrated adequate discriminant validity and were empirically distinct (Hwang et al., 2023). This confirmed the presence of discriminant validity, as the ratio correlations exceeded the threshold of 0.90. Therefore, the construct was dropped and not included in subsequent analyses. Furthermore, the Average Variance

Extracted (AVE) values, which assess convergent validity, were above the 0.5 threshold, indicating that the indicators sufficiently represented their respective constructs (Goller & Hilkenmeier, 2022). This confirmed that the study variables were both valid and reliable, supporting the appropriateness of the collected data.

Measures	α	CR	VIF
Adaptability	0.840	0.893	1.387
Flexibility	0.813	0.889	1.600
Productivity	0.898	0.916	1.464
Communication Structure	0.723	0.832	1.435
Communication Climate	0.734	0.883	1.615
Communication Flow	0.816	0.872	1.676

Table 3. Reliability, Construct Validity, and Collinearity Results

Table 3 presents the reliability statistics for the constructs. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values for all the constructs were above the minimum of 0.70, demonstrating strong internal consistency. In addition to Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability was also assessed. Unlike Cronbach's alpha, which assumes uniformity in indicator traits across the population and may underestimate reliability, composite reliability is more adaptable and accounts for variability in the indicator traits (Cheung et al., 2024). As shown in Table 3, the results of the collinearity assessment revealed low intercorrelations among the constructs, with all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values falling below the accepted threshold of 5. This indicates that multicollinearity was not present, allowing the independent variables to reliably contribute to the prediction of the dependent variable.

4.3. Structural Equation Model for the Variables

A structural equation model was developed to explore the impact of communication on organizational effectiveness. As illustrated in Figure 1, the model outlines the relationship between the two variables, demonstrating how communication contributes to enhancing organizational effectiveness.

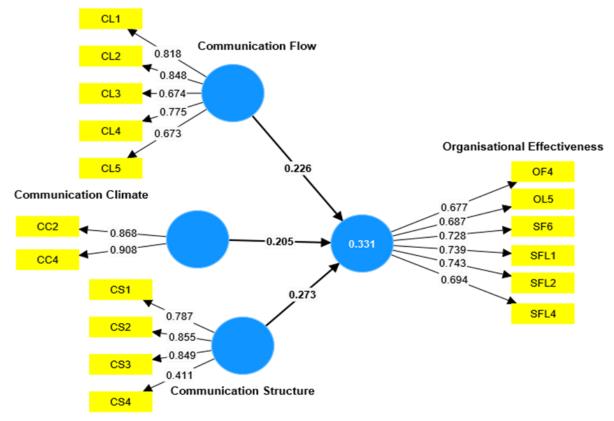


Figure 1. Structural Equation Model for Communication and Organisational Effectiveness

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between communication and organisational effectiveness. Communication was assessed as a three-dimensional construct, including communication flow, communication climate, and communication structure. For communication flow, all five indicators (CF1–CF5) showed high loadings above the recommended validity threshold of 0.5. Similarly, for the communication structure, all four indicators exceeded the minimum validity value. However, for communication climate, only two indicators (CC2 and CC4) had loadings above the threshold, indicating that the other three indicators (CC1, CC3, and CC5) did not meet the required validity threshold. Those indicators loading low were excluded from the model. For organisational effectiveness, none of the productivity constructs were retained in the model. Regarding adaptability, only one out of five indicators (OL5) loaded onto the construct. For flexibility, in the operational flexibility dimension, only one indicator (OF4) out of five was retained, while in structural flexibility, only one indicator (SF6) out of six was retained. For strategic flexibility, three indicators; SFL1, SFL2 and SFL4 were retained out of six (see Appendix A for details). The retained indicators had factor loadings of 0.50 or higher, meeting the minimum validity threshold (Hair Jr et al., 2021). The detailed impact of the predictor variable on the criterion one is displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Communication and Organisational Effectiveness Path Estimates

	β	T	P
Communication Structure → Organisational Effectiveness	0.273	3.139	0.002
Communication Climate → Organisational Effectiveness	0. 205	2.114	0.035
Communication Flow → Organisational Effectiveness	0.226	3.192	0.001

 $R^2 = 0.331$

 R^2 Adjusted = 0.323

The findings (Figure 1 and Table 4) showed that communication climate (β = 0.205, t = 2.114, p = 0.035), flow (β = 0.226, t = 3.192, p = 0.001), and structure (β = 0.273, t = 3.139, p = 0.002) had a positive and significant impact on organisational effectiveness. The coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.331) indicated that the three communication factors, namely communication flow, climate, and structure explained 33.1% of the variance in organisational effectiveness. The Adjusted R^2 (0.323) suggested that these factors alone accounted for 32.3% of the variation in organisational effectiveness. Approximately 66.9% of the variance in organisational effectiveness can be attributed to factors beyond the scope this study covered, highlighting the existence of additional influential variables. The magnitude of the respective β values indicated that communication structure had the strongest influence on organisational effectiveness, followed by communication flow, with communication climate having the least significant impact.

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that communication, specifically its structure, flow, and climate, plays a crucial role in organisational effectiveness. These results emphasize the pivotal role of communication for organizations such as universities. The results revealed that communication structure was the most significant factor contributing to organisational effectiveness, followed by communication flow and climate respectively. The finding that communication structure is a crucial factor aligns well with previous studies such as Andersson and Zbirenko (2014), Ding et al. (2024), Kovačič and Lužar (2011), Löfgren and Eklund (2021), Mehmood (2022) and Musheke and Phiri (2021) that emphasize that a clear and effective communication structure is vital for organisational effectiveness. For example, Löfgren and Eklund (2021) argue that an effective communication structure helps in reducing ambiguities and miscommunication, fostering a more cohesive and efficient work environment. Furthermore, Mehmood (2022) and Musheke and Phiri (2021) highlighted that well-defined communication systems not only improve operational efficiency but also foster employee satisfaction and engagement, which are key drivers of organisational effectiveness.

With respect to the finding that communication flow had a significant influence on organisational effectiveness, this finding is in line with studies such as Kwon et al. (2020), Latuheru (2022), Terzić (2018), and Zhang et al. (2022), which underscore the importance of facilitating smooth communication exchange within organizations. As these studies point out, a lack of proper communication flow can lead to misunderstandings, delays, and inefficiencies, ultimately undermining organisational performance. However, the finding that communication flow has a significant influence on organisational effectiveness

was inconsistent with Kim et al. (2016) who did not find a similar connection, suggesting that the impact of communication flow may vary across different organisational contexts. Despite the inconsistency, the overall consensus in the literature supports the view that communication flow is essential for organisational effectiveness. When there is good information flow among departments, and about policies and goals, performance requirements, government actions and accomplishments and/or failures, it refocuses the recipients to performance hence organisational effectiveness. This is particularly relevant in complex environments like universities, where information must flow between various departments, faculty, and administration for optimal functioning.

Further, the finding that communication climate has a significant influence on organisational effectiveness is supported by studies such as Arab and Muneeb (2019), Helpiastuti and Giyanto (2020), Lantara (2019), Ruliana et al. (2018), Quilon and Perreras (2020), Srimata et al. (2019), and Sugiarto and Putra (2020), that all highlighted the critical role that a good organisational communication climate plays in achieving organisational goals. A positive communication climate is characterized by management that provides motivating and stimulating information to staff, maintains a healthy communication attitude, and values feedback from staff. This approach is marked by sincerity and a proactive effort to reduce conflicts with staff fostering collaboration, ultimately leading to organisational effectiveness. The results of this study, which are consistent with previous research on communication climate and organizational effectiveness, emphasize the importance of fostering a positive communication environment within organizations. As such, the findings underscore the need to place strong emphasis on effective communication as a key factor in enhancing organisational effectiveness, particularly in settings like universities.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and discussion above led to the conclusion that a good communication structure is essential for effective organisational management. This is particularly true when staff have access to communication channels, opportunities to share concerns with management, and are actively listened to. In addition, this is also when communication forums such as meeting are regular. The study also concluded that effective communication flow, facilitated by smooth information exchange within organizations, is crucial. This occurs when managers encourage regular communication between university departments, ensure that university policies are clearly communicated, and provide individual staff members with feedback on their performance. Further, it was concluded that an organizational climate that fosters effective information exchange is essential for organizational effectiveness. This is particularly important government actions that impact the university are communicated, managers maintain a positive attitude toward communication, value staff feedback, and demonstrate sincerity in their interactions with staff.

We recommend managers in universities should establish a clear communication structure. This should involve ensuring that staff have access to reliable communication channels and are encouraged to share their concerns with management, with active listening and timely responses. University managers should also ensure that regular communication forums, such as meetings are organized to facilitate communication. University managers should also promote effective communication flow. This should involve encouraging smooth information exchange between departments, and making sure that key information such as university policies are clearly communicated to all staff members. University managers should also provide individual feedback on performance to align staff efforts with the university's goals and fostering continuous improvement. Further, university managers should establish a conducive communication climate which particularly enables important government actions that impact the university to be communicated, and should also maintain a positive attitude toward communication. The communication climate should also be one that values staff feedback, and managers should demonstrate sincerity when communicating with staff.

7. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study highlights the importance of improving communication structure, flow, and climate within universities to enhance organizational effectiveness. University administrators and policymakers can apply these findings by establishing clear communication channels, fostering open and transparent information exchange, and creating a positive communication climate that encourages feedback and trust. These

improvements can enhance collaboration, boost staff motivation, and streamline decision-making, ultimately benefiting lecturers, other staff, students, and other stakeholders. A well-organized communication system not only improves teaching and learning outcomes but also supports effective governance, ensuring that institutional goals are clearly understood and efficiently achieved. By prioritizing effective communication, universities can foster a more cohesive, efficient, and successful environment hence organisational effectiveness.

8. LIMITATIONS

This article underscores the critical role of communication in promoting organisational effectiveness. Nonetheless, despite the contributions of this study, it has some limitations that warrant attention in subsequent research. Notably, the investigation's scope was restricted to administrative and academic leaders from a limited number of public universities (four), which may not be representative of the broader higher education landscape. Future studies could expand the sample to include multiple universities, both public and private, to provide a broader perspective. On the other hand, the indicators for the construct of message characteristics did attain validity and were subsequently removed from the analysis. This suggests that the indicators may need to be revised and tested again, potentially in other university settings, including private institutions. Further, this study employed a quantitative approach to draw generalisable conclusions. Therefore, future research might benefit from using qualitative or triangulation of approaches to allow for an in-depth and exploratory examination.

Acknowledgment. We acknowledge the university administrative and academic leaders from the four public universities that provided responses that were used to compile this study.

Research Ethics. In conducting this study, ethical issues namely, justice, beneficence and non-maleficence were observed. The researchers obtained ethical approval from the Research and Ethics Committee of Kampala International University, and Uganda National Council for Science and Technology.

Data Availability Statement. The datasets generated and analyzed while conducting this study are available from the corresponding author and can be submitted on request.

Conflicts of Interest. The authors declare the existence of no conflicts regarding the publication of this study.

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APPENDIX A. Study Instrument

Section A: Organisa	tional E	ffectiveness
Productivity		
Instruction	IE1	Teaching load is fairly distributed among lecturers
Effectiveness (IE)	IE2	Lecturers are assigned courses that align with their academic qualifications and professional expertise
	IE3	Tasks given to lecturers correspond to their specific areas of specialization
	IE4	Academic performance is evaluated on a regular basis
	IE5	Curriculum and syllabus development, including review and updates, is conducted routinely
	IE6	Lecturers are given sufficient teaching resources and instructional support
	IE7	Course design is responsive to evolving trends and transformations in the education sector
Research	RE1	The university is well-equipped with essential resources such as internet access,
Effectiveness (RE)		statistical software, funding, and other key tools
	RE2	A comprehensive research manual is available, outlining clear research guidelines and quality standards
	RE3	Faculty and students receive training in proper research methodologies and best practices
	RE4	A structured and implemented research agenda guides scholarly activities at the university
	RE5	Opportunities are provided for lecturers to attend seminars and training sessions to enhance their research capabilities
	RE6	Ongoing and completed research projects undergo regular monitoring and evaluation
	RE7	The institution encourages and supports staff to publish their research in peer- reviewed academic journals
	RE8	Dedicated research funding is available to support both faculty and student research initiatives
	RE9	The university maintains collaborative partnerships at local, national, and international levels to strengthen its research initiatives
Financial	FE1	University projects are generally completed within budgetary limits
Effectiveness (FE)	FE2	Salaries for all staff are consistently paid on schedule
()	FE3	The university maintains a positive cash flow, with income surpassing expenditures
	FE4	Procurement of materials stays within the allocated financial plan
	FE5	The university prioritizes purchasing high-quality supplies at cost-effective prices
Extension Services	SCI1	Staff of the university are involved in outreach or extension services
Effectives (ESE)	SCI2	A manual of the university offers detailed policies and processes for extension services
	SCI3	The university's extension program is in line with institutional, regional and
	CCT4	national priorities The variety responde eviably to exposit companity corries needs
	SCI4 SCI5	The university responds quickly to support community service needs The university supports the various outreach programs
Adaptability		
Change Focus (CG)	CG1	The university management pressures itself to work according to change demands
	CG2	The university has mechanism of updating its stakeholders about changes introduced
	CG3	Management constantly communicates to staff about the need for change
	CG3	The university is involved in partnerships with other universities
	CG4 CG5	The university is involved in partnerships with other universities The university actively engages in collaborations with various stakeholders,
		including development agencies and funding organizations
Customer Focus (FC)	CF1	A dedicated platform exists within the university to facilitate dialogue between stakeholders and the administration about their expectations and concerns

	CF2	University leadership works to implement academic programs that align with the interests and needs of its stakeholder groups
	CF3	Stakeholder inquiries regarding newly introduced programs or courses are
	CE4	addressed appropriately
	CF4	Internal members of the university community are treated with respect and acknowledged as essential contributors
Organisational	LC1	The institution offers learning opportunities to individuals within its community
Learning (OL)	LC2	Learning achievements are recognized and rewarded by the university
	LC3	The university's leadership appreciates and acknowledges employees who show initiative
	LC4	The institution partners with the broader community to respond to mutual challenges and needs
	LC5	Leaders within the university provide mentorship and guidance to those under their supervision
Flexibility		
Operational	OS1	The university operates with flexibility across its various organizational levels
Flexibility (OF)	OS2	New academic programs are developed in response to current market trends and industry needs
	OS3	The institution promptly adopts innovative systems and educational offerings
	OS4	University staff deliver services with minimal delays, ensuring quick turnaround times
	OS5	High levels of customer satisfaction are maintained through quality service by university personnel
Structural Flexibility	SF1	A structured system of incentives and recognition is in place to motivate staff
(SF)	SF2	The university's planning processes are formalized and follow clear procedures
(82)	SF3	Communication practices within the university are properly recorded and systematically organized
	SF4	Specialized teams have been established within departments to enhance expertise and effectiveness
	SF5	Decisions made by various university bodies are communicated clearly and transparently
	SF6	Decision-making processes are efficient and well-executed across all institutional levels
Strategic Flexibility	SFL1	The university swiftly revises its strategies to respond to emerging challenges and
(SF)		circumstances
	SFL2	Each year, new strategies are developed to boost institutional performance
	SFL3 SFL4	Strategic planning is aligned with the university's broader mission and vision. The institution has contingency plans in place to ensure functionality during
	SFL5	emergencies The university administration is consistently working on innovative approaches
		to support institutional growth and expansion
	SFL6	Embracing advanced technologies, the administration actively seeks to set new benchmarks in workforce performance
Section B: Commun	nication	<u> </u>
Communication	CS1	University management respects communication rights of its of its staff
Structure (CS)	CS2	University management knows and understands the problems faced by its staff
` '	CS3	Management of the university listens and pays attention to communication from staff
	CS4	In this university, management meetings are regularly conducted
Communication	CF1	There is good information flow among university departments
Flow (CF)	CF2	Information about university policies and goals is communicated
Tiow (CI)	CF3	Information about my performance is given
	CF4	Information about my performance is given Information about government action affecting the university is communicated
	CF5	Information about accomplishments and/or failures of the university is communicated
Communication	CC1	Communication given by top management of the University to staff motivates
Climate (CC)	551	and stimulates an enthusiasm for meeting its goals

	CC2	The university's leadership maintains a constructive approach to communication
	CC3	Feedback from staff members is appreciated and considered important by the administration.
	CC4	Communication from the university's management to employees is genuine and transparent
	CC5	Effective communication by the administration helps in minimizing misunderstandings and disputes with staff
Message	MC1	Informal communication, such as gossip or the grapevine, is acknowledged by
Characteristics (MC)		management as a significant channel of information within the university
	MC2	The administration is concerned about maintaining open and unrestricted communication
	MC3	The time it takes for information to be disseminated to staff is a key concern for university management
	MC4	The university has put in place channels to ensure that staff members receive relevant information